

As a state representative, I sponsored the legislation which changed Michigan to a "shall issue" state for concealed pistol licenses in 2001.

The intent behind the change was to recognize our citizens' Constitutional rights and create a uniform, fair system *statewide* for issuing CPLs.

Today, over 305,000 Michigan residents have a CPL, and those folks have proven that this move to was the right thing to do.

Even those that opposed the bill in 2001 will admit that their doom and gloom predictions did not happen. After over 10 years experience, we know without a doubt that *folks who get a CPL are among the most law-abiding in our society.*

But the system and process in Michigan are broken, outdated and hardly uniform.

Rules, fees, training standards, gun board policies and decision times vary widely from county to county, to the detriment of the 98% of applicants who are eventually approved.

The reform proposal before you today addresses the problems. It is about BEST PRACTICES delivering BETTER SERVICES to the BEST-TRAINED GUN OWNERS in the nation.

The Best Practices we are proposing include

1. ***"Elimination of local gun boards, outdated entities created during the dawn of Michigan gun control laws in 1927."***
 - No other "shall issue" state in the nation uses a local gun board to issue CPLs
 - All other states issue through a single local or state agency.
 - This simply eliminates one costly, duplicative and time-consuming step.
2. ***"County sheriffs will assume the responsibility of gun boards. Accountability for fairness and efficiency in licensing will rest with one local elected official."***
 - Sheriffs also possess local knowledge of "bad actors" in the community.
 - Furthermore, removing their obligation to serve on the gun board or review panels will save them time, money and manpower.
3. ***"Annual reporting requirements will be strengthened to provide a more accurate picture of the law-abiding nature of those with a CPL."***
4. ***"Instructors will be required to list more information on certificates to help counties better verify their qualifications to teach."***
5. ***"And most importantly, the background check and fingerprint requirements will not change."***

To bring about Better Service

6. ***"We'll ensure CPL fees will be used to improve service to taxpayers."***
 - The \$41 that counties receive out of each fee will be dedicated to local funds for staffing, equipment, supplies and technology to improve service delivery.
 - No longer will CPL fees be used to subsidize unrelated operations.
7. ***"We'll put a stop to endless delays, by requiring that license decisions be made within 45 days from the date of application."***
 - The original law was written during the era of snail mail and hardcopy records. This substitute will modernize the CPL time frame to reflect the technology that exists today.
8. ***"The deadline will finally have some teeth. If counties fail to obey the law, they will have to refund their \$41 portion of the fee and issue a temporary license."***
 - Many counties ignore the law now because there is no consequence.
9. ***"Clerks will mail approved licenses. They'll also send renewal notices 3-6 months prior to the expiration date. If county treasurers can do this for dog licenses, they should do it for CPLs."***
10. ***"Under this substitute, a CPL fee will get you a CPL, like a driver's license fee gets you a driver's license. No more nickel and diming of law-abiding gun owners. Counties will not be able to charge more than the statutory \$105 fee, except for purely optional services."***
 - Our CPL fee is the highest in the Midwest and 6th highest in the nation for a "shall issue" state. Applicants deserve better for their hard-earned money.
11. ***"Even more teeth will be added to the law for folks whose licenses are unjustifiably denied."***
 - The proposal increases financial amounts courts can award to applicants when denials are overturned upon appeal.
12. ***"Applicants will no longer fear financial penalty simply for pursuing due process of a Constitutional right in the courts."***
 - Current law can be used to force applicants to pay the county's court and attorney costs if their appeal is unsuccessful. Applied to any other Constitutional right, this would be unacceptable and it will be eliminated.
13. ***"The proposal also creates a uniform reinstatement process for folks who obey the law during the suspension period and still qualify for a CPL."***

To achieve the Best-Trained Gunowners in the Nation

14. ***"We will strengthen the quality of CPL training provided to folks by increasing the required number of rounds fired from 30 to 98. This firing standard will be the strongest in statute in the U.S. for a basic CPL."***
15. ***"We also create a reasonable avenue for law-abiding folks to get a 'shall issue' exemption to the no concealed carry zones."***

- If they have completed an additional 9 hours of training and fired an additional 94 rounds or if they are certified firearms instructors.

16. *"This reform does not focus on creating exemptions to the zones based solely on occupation, rather it places the emphasis on advanced training and proven competency in the legal use of firearms."*

17. *"A licensee can carry openly in places such as schools and hospitals. They want to carry concealed. Let's do the common sense thing and let them put a jacket over their firearm."*

- Folks with a CPL are better-vetted and better-trained than ever before.
- It doesn't make sense that they can carry openly but not concealed, as they could for decades until 2001.

Today, we have the opportunity through this bill to bring Michigan CPLs into the 21st Century, lead the nation in establishing even stronger training standards, while bringing about a real recognition in state law of the 2nd Amendment rights of those who elect us.

I thank Senator Casperson and my fellow members of this committee for hearing this bill.